

Date Mailed
September 2, 1998

BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Application of Wisconsin Public Service Corporation
For Approval to Increase Electric and Natural Gas Rates

6690-UR-111

NOTICE OF HEARING

Public Technical Hearing

Direct Testimony Due: September 11, 1998, 4:30 p.m.
Rates Portion, September 22, 1998, 4:30 p.m.

Rebuttal Testimony Due: September 25, 1998, 4:30 p.m.
Rates Portion, September 29, 1998, 4:30 p.m.

Surrebuttal Testimony Due: September 29, 1998, 12:00 noon

Hearing Date: September 30, 1998, 10:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Public Service Commission
Amnicon Falls Hearing Room
610 North Whitney Way, Madison, WI

Hearing for Public Comment

Hearing Date: September 14, 1998, 1:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Hearing Location: Holiday Inn Airport
2580 South Ashland Avenue, Green Bay, WI

Hearing for Public Comment

Hearing Date: September 15, 1998, 1:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Hearing Location: Ramada Conference Center
201 North 17th Avenue
Wausau, WI

On April 1, 1998, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS or Applicant) filed an application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission) under ss. 196.03, 196.20, and 196.37, Stats., for authority to increase rates for electric services and natural gas services.

The April 1, 1998, filing contained WPS's financial and jurisdictional cost information. On May 15, 1998, WPS filed the remaining required data associated with a requested change in rates in compliance with the requirements of the Commission.

The application states in part:

1. Applicant, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, is a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Wisconsin (hereinafter referred to as "Applicant"), has its principal office and place of business at 700 North Adams Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin, 54307-9001, and is a public utility within the meaning of Section 196.01 of the Wisconsin Statutes. It is engaged in the business of generating, transmitting, distributing, and selling [electricity and] natural gas to customers located in a territory of approximately 10,000 square miles in Northeastern Wisconsin. It also serves customers in an adjacent part of Menominee County in Upper Michigan.

2. Due to projected changes in operating costs, as reflected in the detailed testimony and exhibits submitted herewith and incorporated by reference, Applicant's present electric and gas rates yield insufficient revenues to produce a return on equity which is reasonable and just and required for Applicant to have access to capital at a reasonable cost.

WHEREFORE, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Commission grant a hearing upon this application at the earliest possible time and that, in accordance with the provisions of the Wisconsin Statutes, it find and order, based upon its own investigation and upon data to be presented by the Applicant, the Applicant be granted authority to increase its rates for electric and natural gas service in such amounts as will permit the [A]pplicant to earn a just and reasonable return on common equity, to meet the costs of operation, and to provide Applicant with the ability to attract the necessary capital to meet the requirements of the customers in its service area and that it grant such other relief as may seem just, reasonable, and proper; and, further, it is respectfully requested that the Commission take such action so that said increase is effective January 1, 1999.

The company is proposing to increase electric rates by \$36.2 million (8.6 percent) and natural gas rates by \$11.2 million (5.7 percent) in 1999. In 2000, WPS is proposing to increase electric rates by an additional \$24.3 million (5.4 percent) and natural gas rates by an additional \$1.5 million (0.8 percent).

A prehearing conference was held on July 13, 1998. A list of the issues was developed and the schedule for the prefiling of testimony and exhibits was put forth in a letter to the parties

dated July 16, 1998. The issue list is available from the Commission upon request. Full parties are bound by the issues adopted at the prehearing conference and by the schedule outlined in the July 16, 1998, order of the Hearing Examiner.

The utility is responsible for giving notice to its customers of the filing of its application with the Commission and, pursuant to s. PSC 2.73, Wis. Adm. Code, for producing proof of notice at the hearing.

This is a Type III action under s. PSC 4.10(3), Wis. Adm. Code. Since no unusual circumstances have come to the attention of the Commission which indicate that significant environmental consequences are likely, neither an environmental impact statement under s. 1.11, Stats., nor an environmental assessment is required.

NOTICE IS GIVEN that this matter is deemed to be a Class 1 proceeding as defined in s. 227.01(3)(a), Stats.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that a hearing will be held beginning on September 30, 1998 at 10:00 a.m. in the Amnicon Falls Hearing Room at the Public Service Commission Office Building, 610 North Whitney Way, Madison, Wisconsin and continuing at times to be set by the presiding Hearing Examiner. This building is accessible to people in wheelchairs through the Whitney Way first floor (lobby) entrance. Parking for people with disabilities is available on the south side of the building. Hearings primarily for public comment will be held on September 14, 1998, at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Airport, 2580 South Ashland Avenue, Green Bay, Wisconsin and on September 15, 1998, at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at Ramada Conference Center, 201 North 17th Avenue, Wausau, Wisconsin. These buildings are also accessible to people in wheelchairs. Any person with a disability who needs additional accommodations should contact Richard Teslaw at (608) 267-9766.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that Commission staff shall file a synopsis or summary of the testimony or other evidence presented at the hearing in this case. The parties, pursuant to s. 196.24(3), Stats., as amended by 1997 Wisconsin Act 204, Section 24, may demonstrate that a synopsis or summary is not sufficiently complete or accurate to fairly reflect the relevant and material testimony or other evidence presented at the hearing.

Persons who desire to actively participate as full parties must request full party status in writing. Full party status requests should be addressed to Jeffry Patzke, Hearing Examiner, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, Examining Division, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7854.

If there are any questions regarding full party status requests or the hearing scheduled in this notice, please contact the Examining Division at (608) 266-1261.

Docket 6690-UR-111

Other questions regarding this matter may be directed to Richard Kliebenstein, Case Coordinator, at (608) 267-3598.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, _____

For the Commission.

Susan E. Stratton
Administrator
Electric Division

RFK:mem:g:\notice\6690-UR-111 Hearing